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TWENTIETH CENTURY FUND

OF THE

DIOCESE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

HALIFAX, October, 1900.

To the Laity of the Church of England in the Diocese of Nova Scotia:

I think I can take it for granted that every member of the Church of England in this province who attends her services, feels thankful for the Blessings of God received by us as a nation, as a church, and individually and there are very few who will not admit that the present is a fitting time for shewing our thankfulness and our appreciation of the mercies received, in some practical and tangeable manner, not by words only. The man or woman who persistently refuses to give any thing for charitable purposes, is I am happy to think, very seldom encountered, but no doubt there are many who decline to give to a charitable object, when their assistance is asked, on the ground that the particular subject does not exactly met with their approval, and that there are other objects in which they take more interest to any of which they would prefer to contribute.

The Century fund meets all these difficulties and objections, and if one is not disposed to contribute to any particular object mentioned, the others are so numerous and varied, that every one can find something to suit his views, if he is desirous to shew his thankfulness in a practical way.

If you are interested in missionary objects, you have the Foreign Missions in different parts of Africa, in India, China, Japan and South America, some of which are under the immediate superintendence of the Canadian Church.

If you prefer Domestic Missions you have the Indian Missions in the North West and Labrador, and the Missions in Algoma, Ruperts Land and elsewhere in our Dominion.

If you wish to contribute to Missionary object still nearer, you have the Board of Home Missions, or if you prefer it, the Colonial and Continental Society's Missions, the missionaries of which are all doing duty within this Province.

If you are more interested in Educational matters, there are Colleges and Educational institutions within Canada, the system of Education at one or more of which would meet your views, and merit your support, and assistance, which no doubt every college requires.

If you take a less extended view and desire that your contribution should be expended within the diocese, you have in addition to those missions I have mentioned, the fund for the Widow's and Orphan's of the clergy, the Clergy Superannuation Fund, and the Episcopal Endowment Fund.

The fund for the Widow's and Orphan's is very small, each Widow last year received $115.00 only, a sum entirely inadequate for her support, and few of the Clergy in this diocese are in a position to make provision for their wives and children, their stipends are so small.

The fund for the support of the Superannuated Clergy is not sufficient for the purpose. The pension now established varies from $250 for those who have served 15 years to $400 for those who have served 30 years in the diocese. This is a small sum and liable to further reduction if more of the Clergy become entitled to a pension, and the fund is not increased.

If none of these subjects excite your sympathies, you have the affairs of your own parish to consider, and to which you can give assistance. Is there no debt connected with your church or parish? Does the church look weather-beaten and shabby and require repairs or improvements? Have you a Sunday School building, and a Rectory, or are either of them required in your parish? To all or any of these things you can contribute. In my opinion from a lay stand point I consider the institution and efficient maintenance of one or more Sunday

Schools in every parish a most important matter. If children of Church of England parents are not taught in the Church of England Sunday School, but are allowed to attend other Sunday Schools for their religious instruction, you cannot expect to retain them in the Church when they are grown up. That has been my limited experience, and I think I can point out quite a number of cases in support of it.

There is still another point of great importance in connection with your parish, which should interest you, that is the endowment of the parish, or the increase of the annual stipend of the Incumbent. The salaries of the Clergy in this province are, as a whole, far two small. With the exception of the City Incumbents, a clergyman is expected to support and educate his family, to entertain, to dress well so as always to present a gentlemanly appearance, and in most cases to keep a horse and waggon, (without which he cannot possibly do his work) on a very limited stipend. The salaries of sixteen of the country Clergy from all sources are now under $600, many below $500, and one as low as $309.

Of course it is useless to submit these views to a person, if there be any, who is determined to give nothing, but I feel sure there is not a man or woman attending the services of the Church of England in this diocese, who cannot give something to the Century Fund, and who is unable to find an object, among the great variety embraced in it, to which donation may be devoted.

J. N. RITCHIE.

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